

National Historic Landmarks Nomination
Theme VII America at work: Architecture

NPS Form 10-900
(3-82)

OMB No. 1024-0018
Exp. 10-31-84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic John Ballantine House

and or common

2. Location

street & number 43 Washington Street not for publication

city, town Newark vicinity of

state New Jersey 07102 code 34 county Essex code 013

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☐ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☒ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
		☐ no	☐ military
			☒ museum
			☐ park
			☐ private residence
			☐ religious
			☐ scientific
			☐ transportation
			☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Newark Museum Association

street & number 43-49 Washington Street

city, town Newark 07102 vicinity of state New Jersey

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Essex County Hall of Records

street & number 469 High Street

city, town Newark state New Jersey 07102

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory (2186.43) has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

date 1972 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Historic Sites Section, Dept. of Environmental Prot.

city, town Trenton state New Jersey

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ballantine House was originally designed to be a spacious seventeen-room, three-story structure with a full basement and attic. Built of Philadelphia pressed red-brick in common bond it has grey Wyoming sandstone trim.

There is a trefoil arch entry porch with polished granite columns with Corinthian capitals, and the panels around the top of the porch and the front bay window are carved with floral and foliate designs. The house has a modified mansard roof with gabled dormers.

The New York architect, George Edward Harney, drew up the plans, all of which still exist in the collections of the Newark Museum complete with notations as to woods to be used, as well as the original carpenter's, mason's, and plumber's specifications. In fact, the documents on this house are almost complete, comprising a remarkable bit of architectural history. The details have been recorded as follows:

A forced hot-air central heating system as well as five bathrooms were installed. The interior woodwork and carving were supplied by the Newark firm of Kirk and Jacobus . . ., 286 Market Street. The German and Italian craftsmen employed by the firm created hand-carved mantelpieces for \$250 each and utilized the finest quality cherry, ash, maple and mahogany for interior woodwork. Each fireplace was surrounded with a different variety and color of English ceramic tile. Carved mantels on the second and third floors averaged \$75 each. The builder's specifications were so detailed that the architect called for special items, such as all closets were to have "... as much shelving as practicable, an average of three dove-tailed drawers, 18 bronze hooks in each, put where directed by owner." The interior decoration -- painting, gilding ornamental plasterwork, upholstery, draperies, stained glass and numerous furnishings were supplied by the New York firm of D. S. Hess and Company.

The first floor Hall was finished in "Calico pattern" ash that continued up the stairway and throughout the second floor hall. Quartered oak parquet flooring extended the full length of the hallway. Ceilings in both the lower and upper halls were "scratched in the rough plaster and grained in a relief all-over design and richly sheened to match surroundings." The sidewalls, "all the way up to the Arch to be elegantly modelled in a raised relief design artistically worked and colored." The second and third floor halls were to be made to match, "in tone, but plainer."

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
prehistoric		archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400-1499		archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500-1599		agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600-1699	X	architecture	education	military	social
1700-1799	X	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
X 1800-1899		commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater
1900-		communications	industry	politics government	transportation
			invention		X other (specify) Interiors

Specific dates 1884 - 1900 **Builder Architect** George E. Harney (1840 - 1924)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John Ballantine house was one of a number of fine late 19th century town houses that once stood around Washington Square. Today it is the only one that survives and it is incorporated into and administered by the Newark Museum of Art. The house, built in 1884, is virtually unchanged except for some additions in 1899-1900. It is one of the very few completely documented 19th century "palaces" that documentation consist of detailed bills for decorating and for the purchase of furniture, wallpaper, silver, and all of the appointments thought to be fitting for a family of wealth and position in society at that time.

John Ballantine was one of three sons born to Peter Ballantine, a Scotsman who immigrated to America in 1791. He was a brewer by trade. He settled in Newark in 1840 because of the abundant supply of fresh water. The Ballantine Brewery enjoyed a phenomenal success, brewing 36,500 barrels of ale per year in 1867 and over 500,000 barrels in 1913. In 1879, Ballantine began producing lager beer, popular with the immigrant workers of Newark and made familiar by the trade mark of three rings signifying purity, strength and flavor. Ballantine beer and ale made Newark a brewery center. Newark also became an industrial giant, and the largest city in New Jersey, with a good harbor, and a railroad center. Most of Newark's fine houses have disappeared but the Ballantine Mansion is an outstanding example of a very wealthy man's residence built in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

John Holme Ballantine hired the architect George Harney to design and construct a suitable monument to his important social position in Newark. Harney had designed a house for William Roebling in Trenton, the old Brook's Brothers building in New York, and St. Mary's Church in Cold Spring Harbor. Ballantine's house was one of the most luxurious town houses on elegant Washington Square in Newark. Romanesque revival in style, every appointment, inside and out was in the latest fashion. In 1884, the interior design was done by D. S. Hess and Company of New York and when Mrs. Ballantine redecorated in 1891, she engaged the services of Roux and Company, New York. Remarkably, the bills for all of these services are preserved at the Newark Museum. John Ballantine died shortly after the house was finished (1895) but family members lived in the house until 1920, when it was sold to an insurance company. The Newark Museum acquired the mansion in 1937. Most of the house has survived with only minor alterations. A serious cleaning and refurbishing began during the Newark tri-centennial celebration in 1976.

The refurbished rooms are elegant exhibition areas for the museum's great collection of decorative arts. The furniture represents all of the revival styles -Rococco, Gothic, Elizabethan, Moorish, Renaissance, and Eastlake -- which were high fashion at that time. The house, especially the opulent interiors, vividly recreate the Victorian Age.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Elizabeth Quad

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References

A

1	8
---	---

5	6	9	8	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	2	0	3	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

C

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carolyn Pitts

organization National Park Service date August 10, 1984

street & number 1100 L Street, N.W. telephone 343-8166

city or town Washington, DC 20240 state _____

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

The Reception Room . . . , to the right of the front entry, was paneled in bird's eye or curly maple. The carved mantelpiece cost \$150. The sidewalls were covered with a green silk damask and the ceiling was ornamented with painted and relief-molded plaster. The floor was constructed of ash and cherry perimeter bands with a large pine center section. It was felt a needless waste of money to install costly parquet in areas that would be covered by carpets and rugs.

The Drawing Room or "white room" . . . was paneled with carved pine painted a creme color and picked out in gold leaf. The ceiling was ornamented with deep plaster molding and featured painted geometric decorations in swirls and circles. The walls were covered with a creme-colored silk lampas fabric in a large foliate design. According to specifications, the mantelpiece, with a polished onyx interior surround, cost \$250.00.¹

The bills for furnishings totaled \$4,783. A complete inventory of all decorative objects also exists.

There have been minor changes -- the original kitchen and billiard room are now a lecture hall and some of the third floor rooms have been converted into staff meeting rooms and offices. These changes seem minor compared to the richness of the rooms currently on display as part of the museum's collections.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 3

Footnote

1. Curtis, Phillip H. The Ballantine House, The Newark Museum Quarterly, Volume 27, Number 4, Fall 1976, pp. 7-10.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

9

Page

1

Bibliography

Curtis, Phillip H. The Ballantine House, The Newark Museum Quarterly, Vol. 27, No. 4, Fall 1976.

Architect's Plans (indicates room use and woods) 46.69-.70). Newark Museum Archives.

Carpenter's Specifications (46.71). Newark Museum Archives.

Plumber's Specifications (46.72). Newark Museum Archives.

Mason's Specifications (46.73). Newark Museum Archives.

Decorator's (D. S. Hess) Specifications (46.74). Newark Museum Archives.

Photographs of Interiors (54.373-.377). Newark Museum Archives.

Photograph Album of Newark (54.13a). Newark Museum Archives.

Letters and Personal Statements ("Ballantine" file in Museum Library), 1938, 1948, 1954, and 1960.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 1

Legal (Verbal) Boundary

BEGINNING in the westerly line of Washington Street at a point therein distant 155.60 feet southerly from the southerly line of James Street; thence running south 25 degrees 49 minutes west along the westerly line of Washington Street 80.83 feet to the northeasterly corner of land now or formerly of Marcus L. Ward; thence along the same north 64 degrees 8 minutes west 246.31 feet; thence still along the same north 25 degrees 49 minutes east 33 feet; thence still along the same north 64 degrees 8 minutes west 252.90 feet to the eastely line of Plane Stret; thence along the same north 20 degrees 39 minutes east 53.65 feet; thence south 63 degrees 29 minutes east 504.11 feet to the westerly line of Washington Street and the place of BEGINNING.



Ballantine House, Newark, New Jersey
Armen Photo 1976

17530A,b
Ballantine House

43 Washington St., Newark, NJ

Restoration by Restoration, Inc., Washing-
ton, DC 1975

Photo by Armen Nov. 1976



Ballantine House, Entrance Hall
Armen Photo 1976

17531A

Ballantine House-Interior

43 Washington St. Part of entrance hall and stairway
after restoration 1976, by Rambusch Co., New York

Photo by Armen Dec. 1976



Ballantine House Reception Room
Armen Photo 1976

17532A

The Ballantine House

43 Washington St., Newark, NJ

Reception Room 1976

Restoration by Rambusch Co., New York

Photo by Armen Dec. 1976



The Library

". . . a library is essential to every house where there is culture or refinement or reading. . . ." (ART DECORATION APPLIED TO FURNITURE, 1877)

"Statuettes, busts and urns seem a fitting decoration . . . the bust of a great author seems fitly placed on the top of a book case . . . vases, bronzes and other articles of vertu, are most suitable ornaments." (BEAUTIFUL HOMES, 1878)

"Treat the library with reverence. Here the masters of thought make rendezvous . . . here History brings you the past and Science pours out her secrets."
(ART DECORATION APPLIED TO FURNITURE, 1877)

WOODWORK: *Cherry*

FLOORS: *Herringbone patterned oak
and cherry parquet*

CEILING: *Plaster beams and gilded
plaster panels*

Room retains its 1885 decoration.

WALLS: *"Soft old red" painted plaster
with gilded plaster ornament*

WINDOW: *Stained glass; depicting the
Ballentine name: Bal or Bael meaning
fire and Antin meaning worshipper.*



17535A

John Ballantine house, 43 Washington St.,
Newark

Dining room, after restoration by Rambusch
Co., New York, 1976

Photo by Armen Dec. 1976



Ballantine House Drawing Room
Armen Photo 1976

17534A

The Ballantine House

43 Washington St., Newark, NJ

Drawing Room 1976

Restoration by Rambusch Co., New York

Photo by Armen Dec. 1976